

Protecting Colorado's River Recreation

Water Rights For
Colorado's Rivers
– Protecting Flows
for Communities



AMERICAN
WHITEWATER



PROTECTING THE WEST'S LAND, AIR, AND WATER



CONSERVATION
COLORADO

Colorado Water Plan: CWCB will support local governments with water recreation opportunities through continued technical consultation and funding. DNR will explore opportunities to protect instream flows for recreational uses without the requirement of a control structure

Presenters



Yampa River near Craig

Mike Harvey - American Whitewater member, Founder/owner Badfish SUP, whitewater park designer

Josh Kuhn - Conservation Colorado Water Advocate

John Cryan - Western Resource Advocates Staff Attorney

Presentation Overview

Colorado River near Bond

- Overview of current protections
- Economic impacts of river recreation
- Opportunities for updated recreational water rights
- Stakeholder process
- Next Steps

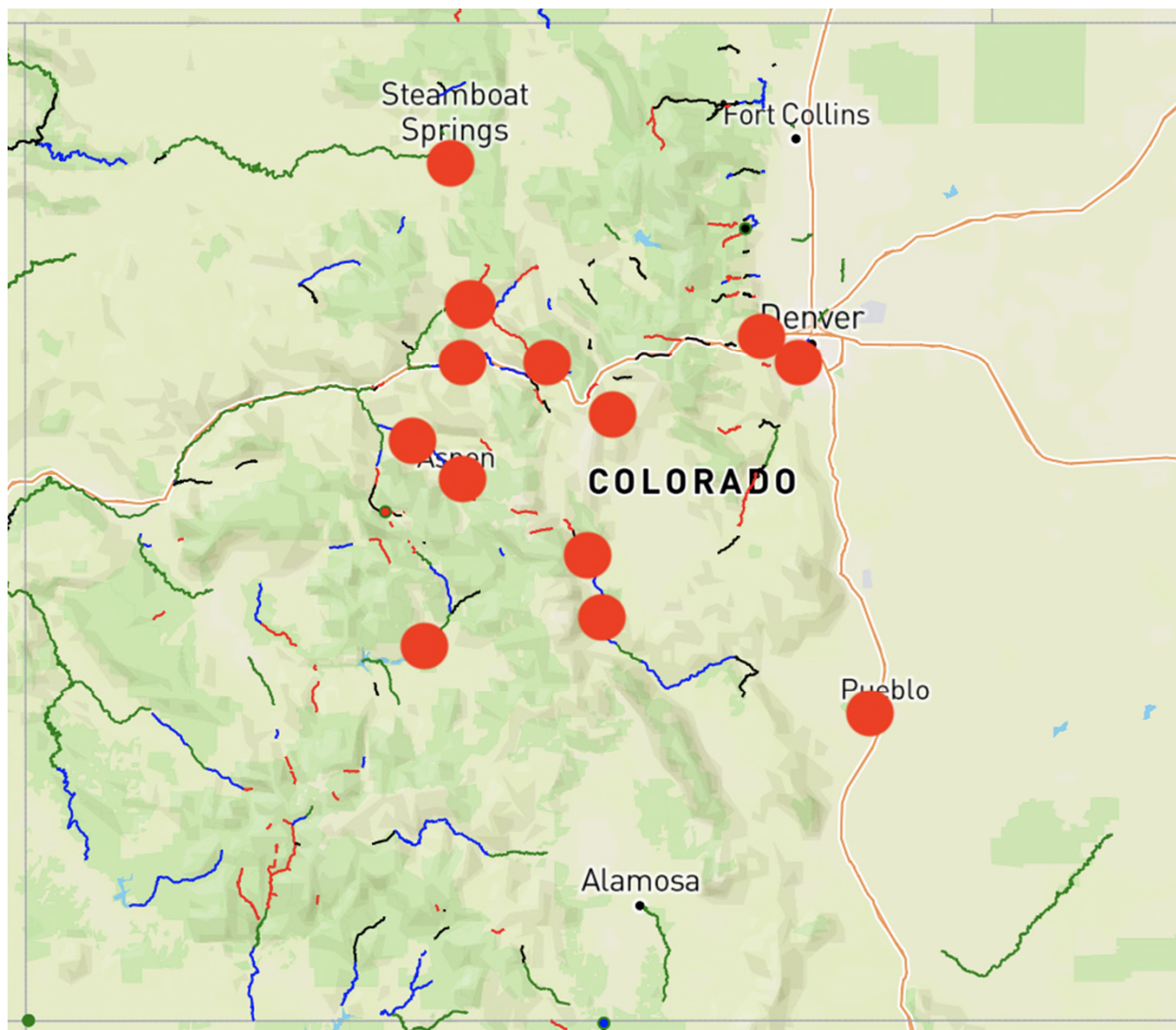


Current Protection of River Recreation Resources

Gore Canyon RICD on the Colorado River

- Needs modification
- Requires costly engineered structures
- Not appropriate for many communities or rivers

Salida RICD on the Arkansas River



Existing River Rec Resources & Current RICDs

- Lines indicate recreational river reaches
- The red dots indicate absolute RICD water rights.

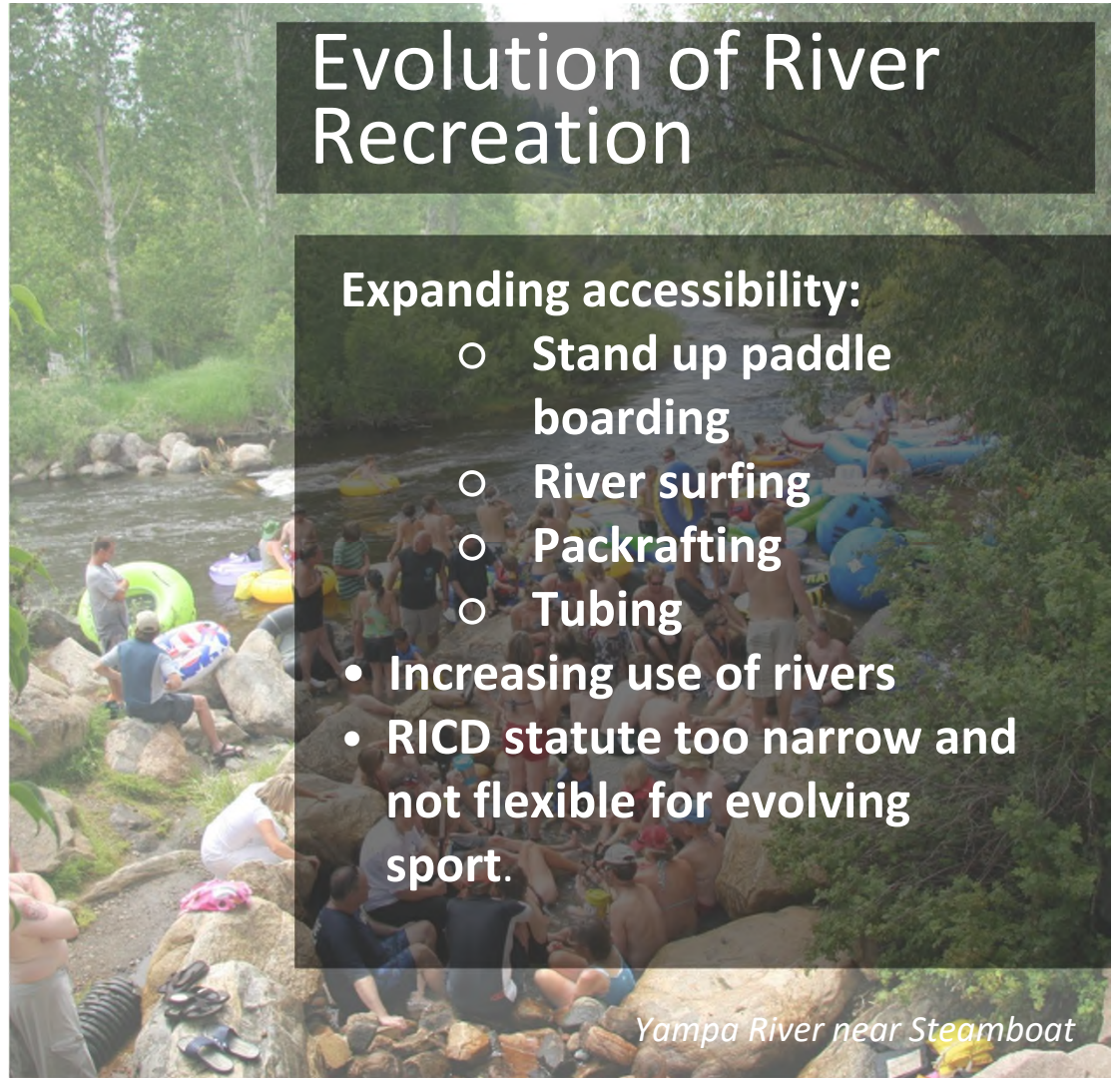


Colorado River near Burns

Evolution of River Recreation

Expanding accessibility:

- Stand up paddle boarding
- River surfing
- Packrafting
- Tubing
- Increasing use of rivers
- RICD statute too narrow and not flexible for evolving sport.



Yampa River near Steamboat



Growth of Outdoor Rec

- \$37 billion in annual consumer spending
- 511,000 direct jobs
- 92% of residents participate

Colorado's outdoor economy contributes to a higher quality of life, making people and communities happier and healthier.



Arkansas River, Pueblo

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The Economics of River Related Recreation in CO

Economic Contributions of Water Related Recreation in Colorado

6.7
Million



Colorado
Participants

\$18.8
Billion



Economic Output

\$10.3
Billion



Contribution to
Colorado GDP

131,000



Jobs

\$6.3
Billion



Household Income
(salaries & wages)

\$2.7
Billion



Tax Revenue

— businessforwater.org —

Cache la Poudre in Fort Collins

Economic Contributions of Water Related Recreation in Colorado

The river basin estimates reflect the contribution that outdoor recreation in those locales has on the statewide economy.

	Participants (thousands)	Output (millions)	GDP (millions)	Jobs	Wages (millions)	Tax Revenues (millions)
Arkansas	1,583.8	\$2,628.8	\$1,436.9	18,400	\$876.3	\$381.3
Colorado	2,722.0	\$3,827.6	\$2,092.2	26,800	\$1,275.9	\$555.2
Gunnison	974.3	\$879.4	\$480.7	6,200	\$293.1	\$127.6
Metro	1,948.9	\$5,190.7	\$2,837.3	36,300	\$1,730.2	\$752.9
North Platte	905.2	\$968.3	\$529.3	6,800	\$322.8	\$140.4
Rio Grande	623.5	\$476.5	\$260.4	3,300	\$158.8	\$69.1
San Juan Dolores San Miguel	544.0	\$711.2	\$388.7	5,000	\$237.1	\$103.1
South Platte	2,371.6	\$3,721.6	\$2,034.3	26,000	\$1,240.5	\$539.8
Yampa White Green	508.2	\$424.7	\$232.1	3,000	\$141.6	\$61.6



“At Mayfly, we see the impact that recreation and engagement has on our community in Montrose, Colorado as well as across the state. We think it's part of our job to help ensure our communities can access and enjoy our rivers and waterways. As an industry, we don't really have any infrastructure, if you will. Our corporate infrastructure is our public lands and our waters.”

DAVID DRAGOO
FOUNDER OF MAYFLY OUTDOORS

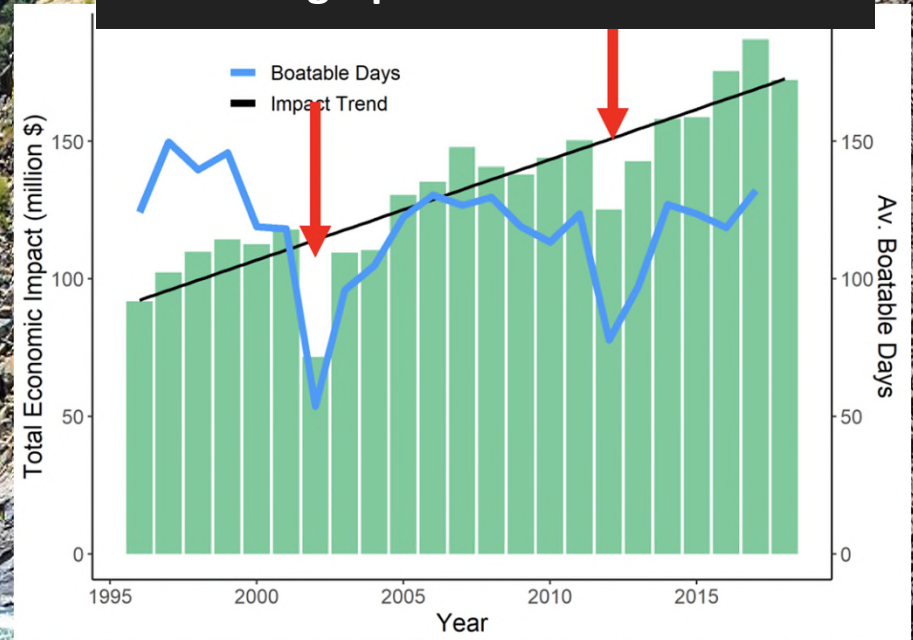
BUSINESS FOR
WATER
STEWARDSHIP

Business Depends on the River

2019:

- 542,405 user days
- \$188,432,999 statewide economic impact
- 73,606,640 direct expenditures in

Impacts of drought years to industry shown in graph





Yampa River near Steamboat



Stakeholding

Communities:

- Craig
- Steamboat Springs
- Eagle County
- Silverthorne
- Rifle
- Trinidad

Fish Creek near Steamboat

The Problems

- Does not protect existing recreational uses
- Requires expensive artificial control structures
- High costs to file for RICDs
- Barriers to improving existing whitewater parks
- RICDs are seen as anti-development
- Does not provide wet water



Eagle River Duck Pond Rec Area, Gypsum



Yampa River near Craig

Potential Solutions:

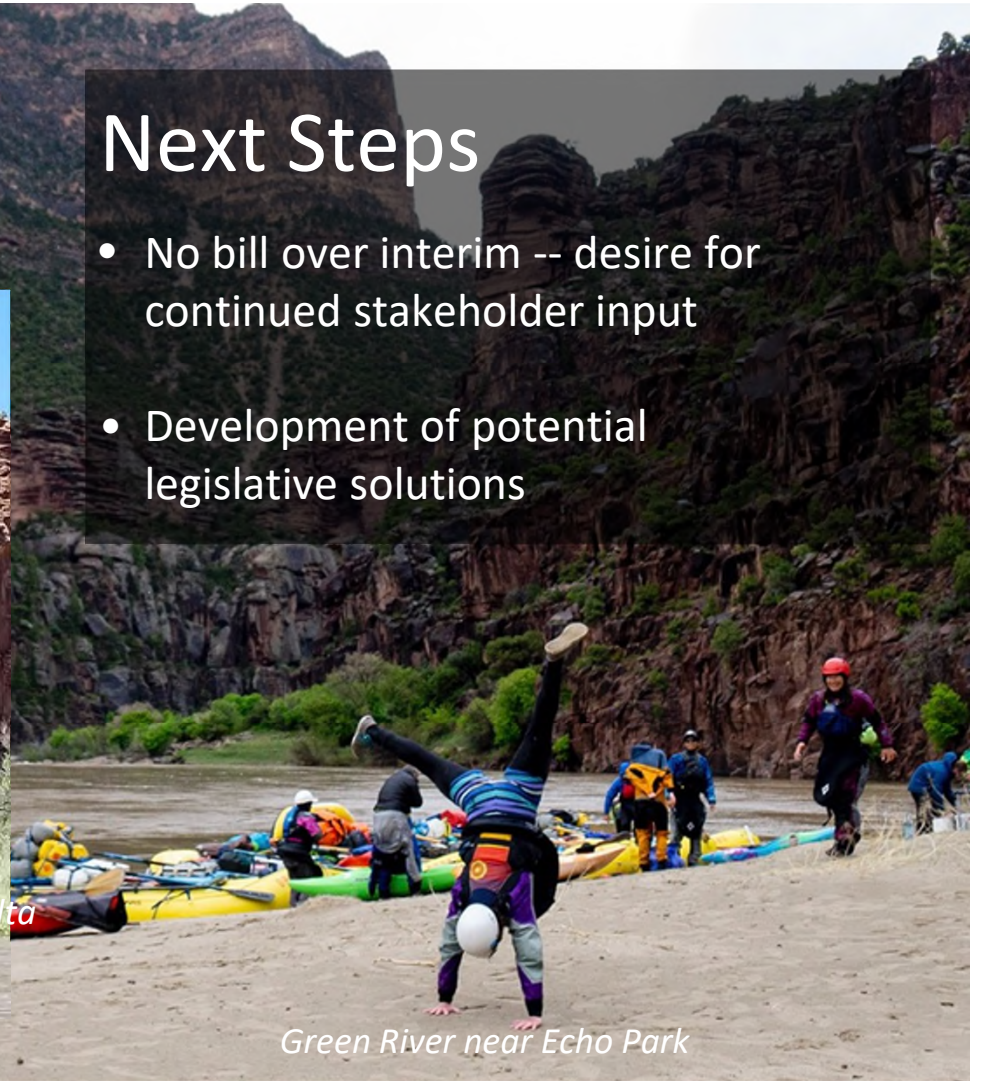
- Consider additional recreation types
- Revise definition of control structure
- Provide for future (real, not speculative) development
- Streamline legal process
- Reduce barriers for repairing existing whitewater structures
- Allow releases of stored municipal water

Next Steps

- No bill over interim -- desire for continued stakeholder input
- Development of potential legislative solutions



Gunnison River below Delta



Green River near Echo Park



Thank You For
Your Time Today!



AMERICAN
WHITewater



WESTERN
RESOURCE
ADVOCATES

PROTECTING THE WEST'S LAND, AIR, AND WATER



CONSERVATION
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Black Canyon of the Gunnison